REMARKS

Claims 4-5 and 7-9 are pending in this application.

Claim 4 has been amended in order to more particularly point out, and distinctly claim the subject matter to which the applicants regard as their invention. The support for the claim amendment is as follows:

- Claim 4 is based on p.12, lines 12-18 (fabric laminated on dense skin layer).

The applicants respectfully submit that no new matter has been added. It is believed that this Amendment is fully responsive to the Office Action dated **October 28, 2005**.

In the present invention recited claims 4-5 and 7-9, an asymmetric porous PTFE membrane comprises two layers: a dense skin layer, and a continuously foamed porous layer. In particular, in the claimed invention, fabric is specifically laminated on the *outer surface of the dense skin layer* of an asymmetric PTFE membrane, not the porous layer, or the inner surface of the dense skin layer which is directly next to the porous layer.

Claims 4-5 and 7-9 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being obvious in light of Reaney (U.S. Patent 5,162,149) in view of Bellairs, et al. (U.S. Patent 4,863,788) or Henn, et al. (U.S. Patent 5,026,591).

Reaney discloses a non-blocking seam tape comprising an asymmetric porous PTFE

membrane having a dense skin layer and a continuously foamed porous layer. The Examiner concedes that **Reaney** does not disclose specific fabrics, and cites **Bellairs** and **Henn** for the disclosure of woven and nonwoven fabrics such as polyester, nylon, or cotton.

The Office Action asserts that **Reaney** discloses that a fabric is laminated on the dense skin layer using an adhesive that flows through the porous layer, and cites Fig. 1 and the paragraph bridging columns 4 and 5 as support. Fig.1 of **Reaney** is reproduced below with added descriptions of the items.:

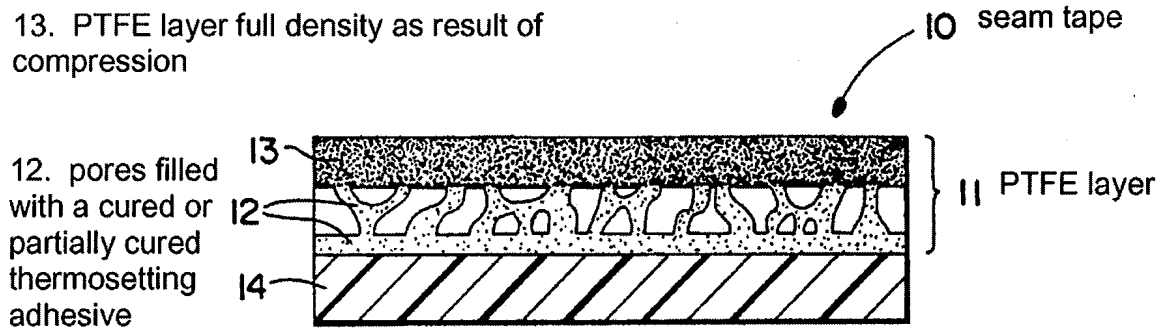

Fig- 1

Furthermore, Fig. 2 describes the laminated fabric in relation to the layers of the PTFE membrane:

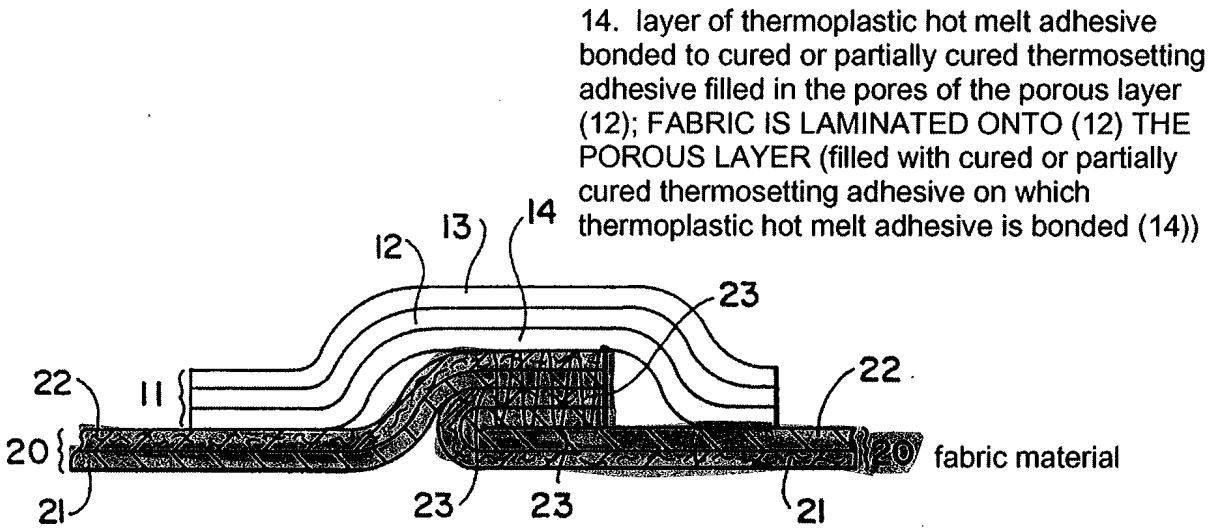

Fig- 2

Col. 3, lines 3-17 of **Reaney** dicloses that (13), the outermost layer of the PTFE membrane shown in Fig. 2, is the dense skin layer; (12) represents the porous layer of the PTFE membrane having pores filled with cured or partially cured thermosetting adhesive; and, (14) is a layer of thermoplastic hot melt adhesive bonded to (12). In particular, Fig. 2 shows that the fabric material (20) is laminated by thermoplastic hot melt adhesive (14), which is bonded to the cured or partially cured thermosetting adhesive filled in the porous layer, onto the porous layer (12). The *outermost layer* of the PTFE membrane shown in Fig. 2, which is the dense skin layer (13), *does not come into contact with the fabric material.* In fact, Fig. 2 shows that nothing is laminated on the outer surface

of the dense skin layer (13).

However, contrary to the claimed invention, **Reaney** does not teach an asymmetric porous PTFE membrane wherein woven or nonwoven *fabric is laminated on a outer surface of the dense skin layer*, and thereby forming an air permeable and waterproof membrane. Examples 4-6 contained in the Specification describe that, in the present invention, fabric is laminated directly on to the outer surface of a dense skin layer by adhesive applied directly on the outer surface of a dense skin layer, not fill in the pores of the porous layer as taught by **Reaney.** In other words, as currently amended, claim 4 requires the fabric to come into contact with the dense skin layer, whereas according to **Reaney**, the fabric does not come into contact with the dense skin layer. (Office Action, p.4, lines 15-16).

In fact, **Reaney** *teaches away from the present invention.* **Reaney** discloses that an "adhesive penetrates into the surface pores...[of the] expanded porous PTFE layer" and solidifies, in order to provide a surface on which hot melt adhesive can be applied. (Reaney, col.3, lines 45-49). Thereafter, fabric is laminated onto this *porous*, adhesive-penetrated, hot melt adhesive-applied, PTFE layer. (Reaney, Fig.2; col.3, lines 11-17). Accordingly, contrary to the present invention wherein fabric is laminated on the outer surface of a dense skin layer**, Reaney** teaches that a fabric must *necessarily* be applied on a *porous layer* of an asymmetric PTFE membrane. In fact, **Reaney** specifies that the PTFE layer that does not come into contact with fabric is the layer densified by heat, forming a dense skin layer. (Reaney, col.3, lines 49-56; Fig.2).

Reaney, **Bellairs**, and **Henn**, in combination, fail to teach or suggest the present invention recited in claims 4-5 and 7-9 because the references do not disclose a material for clothing wherein fabric is laminated on an outer surface of a dense skin layer of an asymmetric porous PTFE membrane. In fact, **Reaney**'s disclosure teaches away from the claimed invention.

It is respectfully requested that this rejection be reconsidered and withdrawn.

In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, claims 4-5 and 7-9, as amended, are in condition for allowance, which action, at an early date, is requested.

If, for any reason, it is felt that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the applicants undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

In the event that this paper is not timely filed, the applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fees for such an extension of time and any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper, to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

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Enclosures:

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